NOVA SCOTIA

NOUVELLE-ÉCOSSE

Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources

French-language Services Plan 2013-2014

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1 Message from the Deputy Minister

It is my pleasure to present the French-language Services Plan for 2013-14 on behalf of the Department of Natural Resources.

In a broad sense, the department's mandate is the management of Nova Scotia's biodiversity, forest, geological, and provincial park resources and the administration of the province's Crown land. This role helps to directly support healthy communities province wide, and particularly in the rural areas of the province.

Our overall actions are guided by "The Path We Share, A Natural Resources Strategy for Nova Scotia 2011-2020" as work continues on the implementation of key actions from the Strategy. Our actions with respect to French-language services will be guided by this plan.

The department looks forward to working with our partners and stakeholders - in government, in industry, and in non-governmental organizations - who are working with us to build a better future for all Nova Scotians through responsible and sustainable natural resources management.

Mr. Duff Montgomerie
Deputy Minister, Natural Resources

2 Introduction / Context

The *French-language Services Act*, which was proclaimed in December 2004, and the French-language Services Regulations (effective December 31, 2006) provide the legislative framework covering the delivery of French-language services in the province. Part of the Regulations includes an outline of the required content of French-language services plans. The Act can be found at http://nslegislature.ca/legc/statutes/frenchla.htm while the Regulations can be found at http://www.novascotia.ca/just/regulations/regs/flsregs.htm.

Another document that provides guidance to French-language services plans is the Nova Scotia Strategic Plan for French-language Services for 2009-2013 (available at www.pch.gc.ca/pgm/lo-ol/entente-agreement/services/ne-ns/09-13-mod-EntenteServices-N-E-eng.pdf). The strategic plan provides overall direction to government and its general objective is to support the development, delivery, and expansion of quality government services in French for Nova Scotia's Acadian and francophone community and to support initiatives which will enhance the vitality and assist with the development of the community.

This strategic plan identifies three specific objectives. These are:

Objective #1 - Framework and Policy. Strengthen the policy, regulatory, and administrative framework in support of the *French-language Services Act*.

Objective #2 - Enabling French-language Services. Consult, plan, develop, and deliver French-language services in priority areas.

Objective #3 - Community Development and Capacity Building. Support the Acadian and francophone community in its long-term development and sustainability.

Departmental information for 2012-13 that is provided later in this plan is grouped using these three objectives.

Another Nova Scotia Strategic Plan for French-language Services is being finalized that will cover the five year period from 2013 to 2018. This strategic plan is expected to have three different objectives. These are:

Objective #1 - Leadership and Policy Direction. Champion and support the policy development, planning and administrative frameworks for the implementation of the *French-language Services Act* and Regulations.

Objective #2 - Availability and Accessibility of French-language Services. Increase the prevalence and awareness of French-language services through active offer,

communications, printed and electronic material, and increased French-language capacity of public servants.

Objective #3 - Community Engagement and Outreach. Engage the Acadian and francophone community and provide services which support its development and growth.

Departmental information for 2013-14 that is provided later in this plan is grouped using these three objectives.

3 Responses to French Requests

Senior department staff have been provided with information describing the circumstances when responses in French are required to meet the requirements of the French-language Services Regulations. The response to any written correspondence in French that the department receives is expected to be made in French. Translation services from Acadian Affairs will be utilized as necessary.

4 French-language Services Inventory

A number of website pages, on-line reports and publications have been translated and are available now in French. This includes information on living with coyotes, implementing ecosystem-based integrated resource management in Nova Scotia, several of the more popular woodlot management course modules, the parks newsletter, the provincial parks campers guide, and information on the provincial wildlife park. Material continues to be added to the website.

French language services are also provided for anyone who wishes to make a camping park reservation using the toll-free reservation phone line.

5 French-language Services Coordinator

The department's French-language Services Coordinator is Peter Woolaver, Corporate Strategist (pdwoolav@gov.ns.ca).

6 Progress in Reaching Goals and Objectives for 2012-13

6.1 Corporate Objective #1 - Framework and Policy

The objective was to strengthen the policy, regulatory, and administrative framework in support of the *French-language Services Act*.

Corporate Objective #1.2 - Institutional Responsibilities

The expected result was that designated public institutions better fulfill their obligations pursuant to the *French-language Services Act* and its regulations.

Department objectives for 2012-13 included:

- providing support for relevant initiatives of Acadian Affairs.

Planned measures for 2012-13 included:

- providing regular representation on the French-language Services Co-ordinating Committee.
- providing departmental information for the annual progress report on French-language services.
- promoting, within the department, relevant Acadian Affairs initiatives and projects.
- developing an information package for use in the department to explain and promote departmental responsibilities under the *French-language Services Act*.

Progress in reaching goals and objectives for 2012-13 included:

- attendance at the French-language Services Co-ordinating Committee meetings.
- responding to the request for departmental information for the annual progress report on French-language services.
- promoting, within the department, relevant Acadian Affairs initiatives and projects, including training sessions and lunch and learn sessions.

6.2 Corporate Objective #2 - Enabling French-language Services

The objective is to consult, plan, develop, and deliver French-language services in priority areas.

Corporate Objective #2.1 - Consultations

The expected result was that designated public institutions deliver services that better respond to the priority needs of the Acadian and francophone community as identified through consultation.

Department objectives for 2012-13 included:

- providing appropriate opportunities for consultation as the department proceeds with the implementation the natural resources strategy .

Planned measures for 2012-13 included:

- raising awareness within the department of the need to include a means of collecting feedback from the Acadian and francophone community during any province wide consultations undertaken during the year.

Progress in reaching goals and objectives for 2012-13 included:

- providing translation services at several sessions held during consultations on the best use of Crown land in western Nova Scotia and on how to develop a more sustainable provincial park system.

Corporate Objective #2.2 - Internal Communications

The expected result is that public service employees are more knowledgeable about the approach being taken by the government to provide French-language services. They are more sensitive to cultural issues pertaining to the Acadian and francophone community and more aware of the requirements to communicate in French; they promote services in French to the public.

Department objectives for 2012-13 included:

- improving the capacity of the department to deliver services in French.

Planned measures for 2012-13 included:

- preparing a list of department staff who would be available to, on an as needed basis, assist French speaking clients.

- developing resource material, and providing it to staff, that will help to raise awareness among staff of the desirability of making additional services available in French.

Progress in reaching goals and objectives for 2012-13 included:

- identifying a bilingual staff person able to assist with the preparation of responses to requests in made in French that are received by a central office, and that are related to the department's mandate.

Corporate Objective #2.3 - Communications with the Public

The expected result is that key stakeholders and the community better understand the approach being taken by the government to provide French-language services and they are more aware of the programs and services available to them.

Department objectives for 2012-13 included:

- making it easier for clients to access information and services in French.

Planned measures for 2012-13 included:

- undertaking website enhancements to make it easier for clients to locate information that is provided in French.

Progress in reaching goals and objectives for 2012-13 included:

- providing additional content in French on the department website, especially material related to the consultations on the best use of Crown land in western Nova Scotia. Consolidating the French-language content on the website has been deferred to 2013-14.

Corporate Objective #2.4 - Service Delivery

The expected result is that services in French considered as priorities are identified, strategies or approaches for service delivery are implemented, and services are offered.

Department objectives for 2012-13 included:

- increasing the amount of information available in French.

Planned measures for 2012-13 included:

- reviewing existing website content to identify additional information that would be desirable to have available in French, and working with Acadian Affairs to have the information translated.
- promoting the translation of new material developed during the year.

Progress in reaching goals and objectives for 2012-13 included:

- adding additional content in French to the department website, especially material related to the consultations on the best use of Crown land in western Nova Scotia.

Corporate Objective #2.5 - Human Resources

The expected result is that the capacity of the Public Service to provide services in French has increased.

Department objectives for 2012-13 included:

- working with Acadian Affairs to provide opportunities for staff to access French-language training.

Planned measures for 2012-13 included:

- distributing information on upcoming training to staff.

Progress in reaching goals and objectives for 2012-13 included:

- compiling a list of department staff interested in being notified on French-language training opportunities.

6.3 Corporate Objective #3 - Community Development and Capacity Building

The objective is to support the Acadian and francophone community in its long-term development and sustainability.

Corporate Objective #3.1 - Preservation and Growth of the Community

The expected result is that government has helped Acadian and francophone community organizations realize objectives expressed in the community's Comprehensive Development Plan 2009-2014.

Department objectives for 2012-13 included:

- engaging the Acadian and francophone community in consultations on the provincial park system.

Planned measures for 2012-13 included:

- undertaking a park system review to create a provincial park system that is sustainable over the long-term and reflects public values.

Progress in reaching goals and objectives for 2012-13 included:

- providing sessions held in French for the consultations. French sessions, linked by video conference, were held at the Halifax location of the Universite Sainte-Anne, Pointe-de-l'Eglise, Tusket, Petit-de-Grat, and Grand-Etang. Two members of the public participated in these sessions.

7 Goals, Objectives, and Measures for 2013-14

7.1 Corporate Objective #1 - Leadership and Policy Direction

The objective is to champion and support the policy development, planning, and administrative frameworks for the implementation of the *French-language Services Act* and Regulations.

Corporate Objective #1.1 - Championing French-language Services

The expected result is that designated public institutions have fostered a positive environment where French-language services are encouraged, expected, respected, and valued; are aware of their obligations relating to French-language services and have fulfilled their obligations pursuant to the *French-language Services Act* and Regulations; and have a vision for ensuring progress and have integrated French-language services into departmental policies, programs and service delivery.

Department objectives for 2013-14 include:

- raising staff awareness of departmental responsibilities and obligations with respect to French-language services.
- participating in and supporting initiatives led by Acadian Affairs.

Planned measures for 2013-14 will include:

- providing information on French-language services as part of an orientation manual being developed for new employees.
- promoting, within the department, relevant Acadian Affairs initiatives and projects.

Corporate Objective #1.2 - Policy, Planning and Administration Frameworks

The expected result is that designated public institutions are supported in meeting their obligations pursuant to the *French-language Services Act* and Regulations through programs and services from Acadian Affairs and other central support units; Acadian Affairs supports the Minister responsible for the *French-language Services Act* in fulfilling obligations pursuant to the *French-language Services Act* and Regulations; and the French-languages Services Co-ordinating Committee assists and advises the Minister of Acadian Affairs on the implementation of the *French-language Services Act*.

Department objectives for 2013-14 include:

- providing direction on departmental responsibilities with respect to the provision of French-language services.

Planned measures for 2013-14 will include:

- developing formal departmental policies and procedures that explain requirements related to the provision of French-language services.

7.2 Corporate Objective #2 - Availability and Accessibility of French-language Services

The objective is to increase the prevalence and awareness of French-language services, through active offer, communications, printed and electronic material, and increased French-language capacity of public servants.

Corporate Objective #2.1 - Active Offer and Communications with the Public

Government provides French-language communications in a consistent manner. The Acadian and Francophone community is informed of services in French available to them and of the approach being taken by the government to provide French-language services. Designated public institutions embrace and promote an "active offer" of services in French and the Acadian and francophone community makes use of these services. The French language and French-language services are visible in public areas of government spaces due to the use of French or bilingual signage and other methods.

Department objectives for 2013-14 include:

- increasing the number of staff participating in the Bonjour! Program.

Planned measures for 2013-14 will include:

- distributing promotional information on the Bonjour! Program internally to encourage more staff to participate.

Corporate Objective #2.2 - Information Materials: Printed or Electronic

The Acadian and Francophone community has access to bilingual or French-language information material, in printed or electronic formats. Government websites have new French-language content and are easy to navigate by French-speaking users because a consistent approach is being followed.

Department objectives for 2013-14 include:

- increasing the availability of departmental materials available in French.

Planned measures for 2013-14 will include:

- identifying new and existing material suitable for translation and utilizing translation services provided through Acadian Affairs.
- updating / revising material already available in French.
- preparing a list of department staff who would be available to, on an as needed basis, assist French speaking clients.
- developing resource material, and providing it to staff, that will help to raise awareness among staff of the desirability of making additional services available in French.

Corporate Objective #2.3 - Human Resources

Government human resources professionals and managers are aware of government's commitment to providing French-language services and they consider requirements for French-speaking employees in recruitment and training activities. The capacity of the Public Service to provide services in French has increased, through recruitment, training, and supports of French-speaking or bilingual employees. Public servants are knowledgeable about the approach being taken by the government to provide French-language services. They are aware of the obligations relating to communicating, delivering and promoting French-language services, and of cultural issues pertaining to the Acadian and Francophone community.

Department objectives for 2013-14 include:

- increasing the capacity of department staff to provide services to French speaking clients.

Planned measures for 2013-14 will include:

- distributing information on obligations related to French-language services.
- distributing training related opportunities to interested staff.
- distributing information on sources of natural resources related technical information available in French.

7.3 Corporate Objective #3 - Community Engagement and Outreach

Engage the Acadian and francophone community and provide services which support its development and growth

Corporate Objective #3.1 - Public Engagement

Designated public institutions have engaged the Acadian and Francophone community and are aware of its needs. French-speaking Nova Scotians are provided with the opportunity to participate in government consultations in French.

Department objectives for 2013-14 include:

- engaging the Acadian and Francophone community, as appropriate, in any consultations on changes in legislation administered by the department that are scheduled during the year.

Planned measures for 2013-14 will include:

- providing mechanisms to give the Acadian and Francophone community the opportunity to provide input as part of any legislative reviews undertaken during the year.

Corporate Objective #3.2 - Agencies, Boards and Commissions

Acadians and Francophones are aware of opportunities to participate on government Agencies, Boards and Commissions, and have submitted nominations.

Department objectives for 2013-14 include:

- following any government wide directives for advertising and filling agency, board and commission vacancies.

Planned measures for 2013-14 will include:

- filling vacancies on departmental agencies, boards and commissions with qualified applicants.

Corporate Objective #3.3 - Complaint Process

The Acadian and Francophone community is aware of the complaints process for government services.

Department objectives for 2013-14 include:

- documenting the department's process for receiving and dealing with complaints that are received..

Planned measures for 2013-14 will include:

- addressing any complaints received in an appropriate manner.

8 Priorities of the Acadian and Francophone Community

The Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse's Comprehensive Development Plan 2009-2014 does not contain any specific objectives related to the department's mandate of natural resources management and Crown lands administration. There are some generic objectives common to all departments and DNR will be working to support several of these by carrying

out the measures identified provided in the previous section. If any other Acadian and francophone community priorities are identified during the year that are specific to DNR, they will be reviewed and appropriate responses will be developed.

9 Conclusion: Contribution to the Preservation and Growth of the Acadian and Francophone Community

The department's primary focus will be on providing information in French that may be of interest to the Acadian and francophone community. The department's role, especially in the rural part of the province, provides support for many Acadian and francophone communities.